GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3335
ANSWERED ON:25.04.2012
EXPLORATION IN SOUTH CHINA SEA
Baitha Shri Kameshwar ;Hazari Shri Maheshwar ;Saroj Smt. Sushila;Upadhyay Seema;Verma Smt. Usha

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Chinese officials have advised India to back off from oil and natural gas exploration in South China Sea by ONGC in collaboration with a Vietnamese company, during ASEAN Summit in Cambodia and warned of grave consequences in case of not discontinuing this exploration;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the time since when ONGC is engaged in exploration of oil in the said area along with the attitude of China at present in this regard; and

(d) the reaction of the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR)

(a) No. The 20th ASEAN Summit held in Phnom Penh, Cambodia in April 2012 was internal to the 10 Member States of ASEAN. It was not attended by any Dialogue Partners of ASEAN, including India and China.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) & (d) ONGC Videsh Limited (OVL), in collaboration with Vietnamese companies, has been engaged in exploration activity in the South China Sea since 1988. China, which is a party to the South China Sea dispute, has raised its concerns on India's hydrocarbon exploration and exploitation projects in the South China Sea off the coast of Vietnam. Government has clearly conveyed that such activity by Indian companies is purely commercial in nature and that the dispute must be resolved peacefully by the countries concerned.